United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in resolution adopted on Saturday, calls on Member States to ensure implementation of Haiti embargo scheduled to begin at 11:59 p.m. tonight, and to inspect ships travelling towards country; confirms readiness to consider further measures to ensure compliance with its resolutions.

+ Secretary-General, continuing African visit in Mozambique, meets with Mozambican President and with President of RENAMO with view to accelerating peace process.

+ In message to mark International Day for Eradication of Poverty, Secretary-General says extreme poverty is universal tragedy which endangers everyone; calls for international solidarity to fight it.

+ In letter to Security Council, Secretary-General says Special Commission examining war crimes in former Yugoslavia is ready to fulfil mandate in support of International Tribunal; has set up large database and sent five investigative missions to territory in last seven months.

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Acting under Chapters VII and VIII of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council has called on Member States to ensure strict implementation of the oil and arms embargo against Haiti, and in particular to halt and inspect ships travelling towards the country in order to verify their cargoes and destinations. By unanimously adopting resolution 875 (1993) on Saturday, the Council confirmed that it was prepared to consider further measures to ensure full compliance with its relevant resolutions.

The Council reaffirmed that in "these unique and exceptional circumstances" the failure of military authorities in Haiti to fulfil their obligations under the Governors Island Agreement constituted a threat to international peace and security. It called on Member States, acting nationally or through regional arrangements and in cooperation with the legitimate Government of Haiti, to use appropriate measures to implement the sanctions called for under resolutions 841 (1993) and 873 (1993).

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Resolution 873 (1993), which was adopted last Wednesday, reimposed the embargo against Haiti which was originally established by resolution 841 (1993), and which was suspended following the Governors Island Agreement. The reimposed embargo is scheduled to go into effect as of 2359 hours Eastern Standard Time tonight, unless the parties to the Agreement reinstate the legitimate Government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and enable the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) to carry out its mandate.

Chapter VII of the Charter provides for action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. Chapter VIII refers to regional arrangements for the maintenance of international peace and security.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, visiting Mozambique with a view to accelerating the peace process there, had meetings today with Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, with Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO) President Afonso Dhlakama, and with representatives of other political parties, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General was also expected to meet with representatives of States participating in the Supervisory and Monitoring Commission, the Cease-fire Commission and the Joint Commission for the Formation of the Mozambican Defense Forces.

On arriving in Maputo yesterday, the Secretary-General met with James Jonah, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and with the Special Representatives in Angola and Mozambique in order to review the status of United Nations peace-keeping operations in those countries. On Saturday, the Secretary-General participated in the Fifth Conference of the Heads of State or Government of the Francophone Countries in Mauritius. He also had private meetings with the Presidents of Mauritius, France, Mali and Chad, the Prime Minister of Togo and the Vice Prime Minister of Belgium.

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In a message marking the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today said that extreme poverty was a universal tragedy which endangered human life in both the poorest societies and the richest ones. The text of his message was read out by Marco Vianello-Chiodo, Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, at an observance at Headquarters today organized jointly by the United Nations and the ATD Fourth World movement.

Everyone, the Secretary-General said, must be involved in the task of putting an end to extreme poverty. The United Nations regarded international action against poverty as one of its noblest aims, and was seeking to end this "unacceptable scourge" through the activities of the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Centre for Human Rights.

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He went on to say that non-governmental organizations were an essential link in increasing global public awareness of the issue, and he paid tribute especially to Father Joseph Wresinski, the founder of ATD Fourth World. By offering everyone better access to education, health, food and decent housing, it would be possible to secure the rights of the excluded and to integrate them into the life of the community, he stressed. Only through a lasting solidarity movement could those goals be attained, through the efforts of States, international bodies and non-governmental organizations, and every individual.

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In the last seven months, the Special Commission examining evidence of war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia has collected and analysed information with the help of a database and sent five investigative missions to that territory, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a letter to the Security Council dated 5 October, he said that the database had been of great assistance, and that the Commission had processed thousands of pages of information on mass killings, the abuse of prisoners, systematic sexual assaults and "ethnic cleansing". That information would provide valuable help to the Special Prosecutor of the International Tribunal established to deal with such crimes.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the Commission had had to postpone or limit its investigative missions and major projects because of the volatile military and political situation in the former Yugoslavia, and because of a shortage of resources before July-August. However, it now had adequate resources for intensified verification work provided that the situation in the former Yugoslavia did not present new complications. The programme of work for the coming months included continuing ongoing missions and sending specialized teams to investigate mass graves, cases of systamatic rape, detention centres and prison camps.

The Secretary-General concluded that in the light of its achievements so far and its projected plans, the Commission was ready and willing to proceed with its work in fulfillment of its broad mandate and in support of the International Tribunal and its Prosecutor.

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